



AN

EPISTLE OF A RELI-  
GIOVS PRIEST VNTO  
his father: exhorting him to  
the perfect forsaking of  
the world.

TO THE WORSHIPFUL

*his very good father, R. S. his  
dutifull sonne R. S. wisheth  
all happines.*

IN childre of former ages, it hath  
bene thought so behofull a point  
of dewty to their parents, in pre-  
sence by seruiceable offices, in ab-  
sence by other affectuall significa-  
tions, to yeld prooffe of their thank-  
full mindes, that neither any child  
could omitte it, without touch of

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Vngrat

vngratfulnes, nor the parents forbear it without iust displeasure. But now we are falne into such calamitye of times, and the violence of heresy hath so crostied the course, both of vertew & nature, that their ingrafted lawes, neuer infringed by the most sauage & brute creatures, canot of Gods people without perill be obserued. I am not of so vn-naturall a kind, of so wilde education, or so vnchristian a spirite, as not to remember the roote out of which I braunched, or to forget my secondary maker and auctor of my being: It is not the carelesnes of a colde affection, nor the want of a dew and reuerent respect, that hath made me such a stranger to my native home, and so slacke in defraying the debt of a thankfull minde, but onely the iniquity of our daies, that

that maketh my presence perillous  
and the discharge of my dewty an  
occasion of daunger. I was loth to  
enforce an vnwelcome courtesy vpon  
any, or by seeming officious, to  
become offensive, deeming it better  
to let time digest the feare, that  
my return into the realme had bred  
in my kindred, then abruptly to intrude  
my selfe, to purchase their  
anger, whose good will I so highly  
esteemed. I neuer doubted, but  
that the beliefe, which to all my  
frendes by descent and pedigree is  
in maner hereditary, framed in the  
a righte perswasion of my present  
calling, not suffering them to measure  
their censures of me, by the vgly  
termes, and odious Epithetes,  
wherwith heresy hath sought to discredit  
my function, but rather by  
the reuerence of so worthy a Sacrament,

ment, and the sacred doome of all former ages. Yet because I might verie easely perceiue by apparent coniectures, that many were more willing to heare of me, then from me, and readier to praise, then to vse my endeouours, I haue hitherto bridled my desire to see them, with the care and ielosy of their safty, & banishing my selfe from the sent of my cradle, in my owne country I haue liued like a forreiner, finding among strangers that, which in my neereft bloode I presumed not to seeke. But now considering, that delay may haue qualified feare, & knowing my person onely to import daunger to others, and my perswasion to none but to my selfe, I thought it highe time to vtter my sincere and duetifull minde, and to open a vent to my zealous affection,



on, which I haue so long smothered and suppressed in silence. For not onely the originall lawe of nature, written in all childrens harts, and deriued from the bowells and brestes of their mothers, is a continuall solliciter vrging me in your behalfe, but the soueraigne decree enacted by the father of heauen, ratified by his sonne, and daily repeated by instincte of the holy ghost, bindeth euery child in the dew of Christianitye, to tender the estate and welfare of his parentes, and is a motiue, that alloweth no excuse, but of necessity presseth to performance of dewty. Nature by grace is not abolished, but persited, not murdered, but manured, neither are her impressions quite rased, or annulled, but suted to the colours of faith and vertew. And if her affec-

tions be so forcible, that euē in hell where rancour and despite cheifly reigneth, & all feeling of goodnes is ouerwhelmed in malice, they moued the rich glutton by experience of his owne misery to carry the lesse enuy to his kinred: how much more in the Church of God, where grace quickneth, charity enflameth, and natures good inclinations are abet-tered by supernaturall giftes, ought the ducty of piety to preuaile. And who but more merciles then damned creatures, could see their dearest frendes plunged in the like perill, and not to be wounded with deepe remorse of their lamentable and imminent hazardes? If in beholding a mortall enemy wroung and tortured with deadly pangues, the toughest harte softeneth with some sorow: If the most frozen and  
fierce

fierce minde cannot but thawe and  
 melte with pity, euen when it seeth  
 the worst miscreāt suffer his deser-  
 ued torments: how much lesse can  
 the hart of a childe, consider those  
 that bredd him into this world, to  
 be in the fall to farr more bitter ex-  
 tremities, and not bleed with griefe  
 of their vncomfortable case. Surely  
 for my owne parte, though I cha-  
 llenge not the prerogatiue of the  
 best disposition, yet am I not of so  
 harsh and currish an humour, but  
 that it is a continuall corrasieue, and  
 crosse vnto me, that wheras my en-  
 deuours haue reclaimed many frō  
 the brincke of perdition, I haue bene  
 least able to employ them, where  
 they were most dew, & barred frō  
 affordinge to my dearest frendes,  
 that which hath ben eagerly sought  
 and beneficially obtained of mere

strangers. Who hath more interest in the grape then he that planted the vine? who more right to the cropp thē he that sowed the corne? or how can the child owe so greate seruice to any, as to him whōe he is indebted vnto for his very life and being? With yong Tobye I haue trauailed farre, and brought home a freight of spirituall substance, to enrich you, & medicinable receites against your ghostlye maladyes. I haue with Esau after long toile in pursuing a painfull chase, returned with such pray as you were wonte to loue, desiring therby to procure your blessing. I haue in this generall famine of all true and Christian food, with Ioseph prepared abundance of the bread of Angells, for the repast of your soule. And now my desire is that my drugges may  
cure

cure you, my pray delight you, and my prouision feed you, by whom I haue bene cured, delighted, and fedd my selfe, that your courtesies may in parte be counteruailed, and my duety in some sorte performed. Despise not good Sir the youth of your sonne, neither deeme that god measureth his endouments by number of yeeres. Hoary senses are often couched vnder greene lockes, and some are riper in the springe, then others in the Autumne of their age. God chose not Isai him selfe, nor his eldest sonne, but yong Dauid to conquere Goliath and to rule his people. Not the most aged person, but Daniel the most innocent infant deliuered Suzanna from the iniquity of the iudges: and Christ at twelue yeares of age, was found in the temple questioning with the

graueſt Doctors. A true Elias can  
 conceiue, that a little cloude may  
 caſt a large & abundant ſhower, and  
 the ſcripture teacheth vs, that God  
 reuealeth to little ones that which  
 he concealeth from the wiſeſt Sa-  
 ges. His truth is not abaſed by the  
 minority of the ſpeaker, who out  
 of the mouthes of infantēs & ſuck-  
 linges can perfit his praifes. Timo-  
 thy was yong, and yet a principall  
 paſtour. S. Ihon not olde and yet  
 an Apoſtle, yea and the Angels by  
 appearing in youthfull ſemblances,  
 giue vs a pregnant prooſe, that ma-  
 ny glorious giſtes may be ſhrouded  
 vnder tender ſhapes. All which I  
 alledge, not to claime any priui-  
 ledge ſurmouting the rate of vſu-  
 all habilities, but to auoid all touch  
 of preſumption in aduiſing my el-  
 ders. ſeing that it hath the warrant  
 of

of scripture, the testimony of examples, & sufficient groundes both in grace and nature. There is diuersity in the degrees of our carnall consanguinity, and the preminence appertaineth to you, as superiour ouer your childes body. Yet if you consider our alliance in the chiefe portion, I meane our soule, which discerneth man from inferiour creatures, we are of equall proximity to our heavenly father, both descended of the same parent, and no other distance in our degrees, but that you are the elder brother. In this sense doth the scripture saye, Call not any father vpon earth, for one is your father which is in heauen. Seing therefore that your superiority is founded vpon flesh and blood, which are in maner but the barke and rine of a man, and our  
equa-

equality vppon the soule, which is mans maigne substance, thinke it I praye you no dishonour to your age, or dilparagement to your person, If with all humility I offer my aduise vnto you. One man cannot be perfect in all faculties, neither is it a disgrace to the goldsmith, if he be ignorant of the milleners trade. Many are deepe lawiers and yett shallowe Diuines, manye verye deliuer in feates of the body, and curious in externall complementes, yet litle experimented in matters of their soule and farre to seeke in religious actions. I haue studied & practised these many yeeres spirituall phisicke, acquainting my selfe with the beating and temper of euery pulse, & traauiling in the scrutiny of the maladies & medicines incident vnto soules. If therefore I pro  
ferr



fer you the fruits of my long studies and make you a present of my profession, I hope you will construe it rather as a dutifull parte, then any point of presumption. He may be a father to the soule, that is a sonne to the body, and requite the benefit of his tēporall life, by reuiuing his parent from a spirituall death. And to this effect did christ say thes words: my mother, and brethren are they, that do the will of my father which is in heauen: Vpon which place S. Climacus shewing to what kinred a Christian ought chiefly to relye, draweth this discourse. Let him be thy father, that both can and will lay his labour to disburden thee of thy packe of sinnes. Let holy compunction be thy mother, to depure thee from thy ordure and filth. Let him be thy brother, that wilbe both  
thy

thy partner and cōpeditour to passe  
 and perfite thy race towards hea-  
 uen. Take the memory of death for  
 thy perpetuall phecere, and vnsepa-  
 rable spouse. Lett thy children be  
 bitter sighes of a sorowfull harte,  
 and possesse thy body as thy bond-  
 man. Fasten thy frendshippe with  
 the Angelicall powers, with which  
 if thou closest in familiar affiance,  
 they will be patrones vnto thee in  
 thy finall passage. This (saith he)  
 is the generation & kinred of those  
 that seeke God. Such a father as  
 this Sainte speaketh of, maye you  
 haue of your owne sonne, to enter  
 you farther in the fore recited affi-  
 nity. Of which happely it was a sig-  
 nificāt presage, aboding the future  
 euent, that euen frō my infancy you  
 were wont in merimēt to call me fa-  
 ther, R. which is the custumary stile

now allotted to my present estate.

Now therefore to ioine issue, and to come to the principall drifte of my discourse, most humbly & earnestly I am to beseech you, that both in respect of the honour of God, your duty to his Church, the comfort of your children, and the redres of your owne soule, you wold seriously consider the termes you stand in, & way your selfe in a christian ballance, taking for your counterpoise the iudgements of God. Take heede in time, that the word *Thecel* writtē of olde against *Baltazar*, & interpreted by *Daniel*, *Dan. 5.* be not verified in you, whose exposition was: *you have bene poised in the scoale, and found of to lighte weight.* Remember that you are in the waining, and the date of your pilgrimage is well nere expired, &  
 now

now it behooueth you to looke to-  
wardes your country. Your force  
languisheth, your senses impaire, &  
your body droupeth, and on euery  
side the ruinous cottage of your  
faint & feeble flesh, thretneeth fall.  
And hauing so many herbingers of  
death to premonishe you of your  
end, how can you but prepare for  
so dreadfull a stranger. The yonge  
may dye quickly, but the olde can-  
not liue long. The yong mens life  
by casualty may be abridged, but  
the olde mens by no phisicke can  
be long adiourned: and therefore if  
greene yeres sometimes must think  
of the graue, the thoughtes of sere  
age should continually dwel in the  
same. The prerogatiue of infancie  
is innocency, of childhoode reue-  
rence, of manhood maturity, and  
of age wisdom. And seeing that  
the

the chiefe properties of wisdome are, to be mindfull of things passed carefull of thinges present, & prouident of thinges to come, vse now the priuiledge of natures talent to the benefitte of your soule, & procure hereafter to be wise in weldoing, and watchfull in foresight of future harmes. To serue the world you are now vnhabable, and though you were habable you haue litle cause to be willing, seeing that it neuer gaue you but an vnhappy welcome a hurtfull entertainment, and now doth abandon you with an vnfortunate farewell. You haue long sowed in a field of flint, which could bring you nothing forth, but a crop of cares, and affliction of spirit, rewarding your labours with remorse and affording for your gaine eternall damages. It is now more then  
a seaso-

a seasonable time time, to alter the  
 course of so vnthriuing a husbādry,  
 and to enter into the field of Gods  
 Church, in which sowing the seeds  
 of repentant sorow, and watering  
 them with the teares of humble cō-  
 trition, you may reape a more be-  
 neficiall haruest, & gather the fruits  
 of euerlasting comforte. Remem-  
 ber I pray you, that your spring is  
 spent, and your somer ouerpast: you  
 are now arriued to the fall of leafe,  
 yea and winter colours haue alrea-  
 dy stained your hoary head. Be not  
 careles (saith *S. Augustin*) though  
 our louing Lorde beare long with  
 offenders. for the longer he staieth  
 not finding amendment, the sorer  
 will he scourge when he cometh to  
 ludgement. and his patience in so  
 long expecting, is onely to lend vs  
 respite to repent, not any way to  
 enlarg

enlarge vs leisure to sinne. He that  
 is tossed with varietye of stormes,  
 & cannot come to his desired port,  
 maketh not much way, but is much  
 tormoiled: So he that hath passed  
 many yeeres, and purchased little  
 profite, hath had a long being, but  
 a shorte life. for life is more to be  
 measured by merittes, thē by num-  
 ber of daies, seeing that most men  
 by many daies do but procure ma-  
 ny deathes, and others in a shorte  
 space attein the life of infinite ages.  
 What is the body without the soule  
 but a corrupte carcase: and what  
 the soule without God, but a sepul-  
 cher of sinne. If God be the way,  
 the life, and the truth, he that go-  
 eth without him, strayeth: he that  
 liueth without him, dieth: and he  
 that is not taught by him, erreth.  
 Well saith *S. Augustine* that God

is our trew and chiefeſt life, from  
whome the reuolting is falling, to  
whome the returninge is riſing, in  
whom the ſtaying is ſure ſtanding.  
God is he, from whom to depart is  
to dye, to whom to repaire is to re-  
uiue, in whome to dwell is to liue.  
Be not you therfore of thoſe, that  
beginne not to liue; vntill they be  
ready to dye, & then after a foes de-  
ſert, come to craue of God a friends  
entertainment. Some thincke to  
ſnatch heauen in a moment, which  
the beſt ſcarce attained in the mou-  
tenance of many yeeres. and when  
they haue glutted them ſelues with  
worldly delites, they would iumpe  
fró Diues his diet to Lazarus croun,  
and from the ſeruice of Satan to the  
ſolacy of a Saint. But be you well  
aſſured, that god is not ſo penurious  
of frendes, as to hold him ſelfe and  
his



om his kingdome salable for the refuse  
 to and reuerſion of their liues, who  
 in haue ſacrificed the principall ther-  
 ng. of to his enemies, and their owne  
 t is brutiſhe appetites, then onely cea-  
 re- ſing to offend, when habilitie of of-  
 ue. fending is taken from them. True  
 nat it is; that a theefe may be ſaued vp-  
 be on the croſſe, and mercy found at  
 de- the laſt gaspe. But well ſaieth ſaint  
 ds *Auguſtine* that though it be poſſi-  
 to ble, yett is it ſcarce credible, that  
 ch his death ſhould find fauour, whoſe  
 ſū- whole life hath earned wrath, and  
 en that his repentance ſhould be ac-  
 ith cepted, that more for feare of hell,  
 pe and loue of him ſelfe, then for loue  
 in, of God or lothſomnes of ſinne, cri-  
 he eth for mercy. Wherefore good Sir  
 ell make no longer delayes, but being  
 ſo neere the breaking vpp of your  
 nd mortall houſe, take time before ex-  
 tremi

tremitie to satisfie Gods Iustice, but  
Though you suffered the bud to be im  
blasted, & the flower to fade, thogh but  
you permitted the fruite to be peri- diff  
shed, and the leaues to drye vp, year d  
though you let the boughes wither, of f  
and the body of your tree growe to tou  
decaye: yett alas keepe life in the ei  
roote, for feare least the wholle be beh  
come fuell for hell fire. for surely ill  
whersoever the tree falleth, there ver  
shall it be, whether it be to south or ble  
north, heauē or hell, & such sap as it it f  
bringeth such fruit shal it euer bear. lay  
Death hath already filed from you der  
the better part of your naturall for- for  
ces, and hath lefte you now to the the  
lees and remissailes of your wearish cor  
and dyinge dayes: the remainder of  
wherof, as it cānot be long, so doth & n  
it warne you speedilye to ransome ber  
your former losses. For what is age lay  
but

about the calendes of death, and what  
 importeth your present weaknes,  
 about an earnest of your approaching  
 dissolution? You are now impath-  
 ed in your finall voiage, and not far  
 from the stint and period of your  
 course: and therefore be not disur-  
 ned of such appurtenances as are  
 behoofull in so perplexed and pe-  
 rillous a iorney. Death in it selfe is  
 very fearefull, but much more ter-  
 rible in regard of the iudgement that  
 it summoneth vs vnto. If you were  
 layed on your departing bed, bur-  
 dened with the heavy load of your  
 former trespasses, and goared with  
 the sting and pricke of a festered  
 conscience: If you felt the crampe  
 of death wresting your hart stringes  
 & ready to make the rufull diuorce  
 betwene body and soule: If you  
 lay panting for breath, and swim-  
 ming

ming in a colde and fatall sweat,  
weried with strugling against your  
deadly panges: O how much wold  
you giue for an hower of repentāce  
at what rate woulde you valew a  
dayes contrition. Then worldes  
would be worthles in respecte of a  
litle respitte. A shorte truce wold  
seeme more pretious, then the trea-  
sures of Empires. nothing wold  
be so much esteemed as a trice of  
time, which now by monethes and  
yeeres is lauishly mispent. O how  
deeply wold it wound your hart,  
when looking backe into your life  
you considered many faultes com-  
mitted and not confessed, manye  
good workes omitted and not re-  
couered, your seruice to God pro-  
mised and not performed. How in-  
consolable were your case, your  
frends being fled, your senses frigh-  
ted

ted, your thoughtes amazed, your  
memory decaied, your whole mind  
agaist, and no part able to performe  
that it should, but onely your guilt  
ty conscience pestered with sinne,  
that would cōtinually vpbreid you  
with most bitter accusations. what  
woulde you thinke when stripped  
out of your mortall weed, and tur  
ned both out of the seruice & hous  
some of this world, you were for  
ced to enter into vncouth & strāge  
pathes, & with vnknownen and vg  
ly company to be cōuented before  
a most seuerer iudge, carying in your  
owne conscience your enditement  
written, and a perfitte register of all  
your misdeedes: when you should  
see him prepared to passe the sen  
tence vpon you, against whom you  
had transgressed, and the same to  
be your vmpier, whom by so many  
offen

offences you had made your enemy: When not onely the Deuells, but euen the Angells should pleade against you, and your selfe maugre your will be your sharpest appeacher. What would you do in these dreadfull exigentes? When you saw that gastly dungeon & huge golfe of hell, breaking out with most fearfull flames: Whē you saw the weeping & gnashing of teeth, the rage of those hellish monsters, the horrour of the place, the rigour of the paine, the terrour of the company, and the eternity of all these punishments, would you then thinke the wise, that would daly in so weighty matters, and idly play away the time allotted to preuent these intolerable calamities? would you the account it secure, to nurse in your bosome so many serpents as sinnes,

or

or to foster in your soule so manye malicious accusers as mortal faltes? Would yo not then thinke one life to little to do penance for so many iniquities, euery one wherof were enough to cast you into those euerlasting and vnspeakable torments? Why then do you not at the least deuote that small remnant and surplusage of these your latter dayes, procuring to make an attonement with God and to free your conscience from such corruption, as by your schisme and fall hath crept into it. Those very eies that read this discourse, and that very vnderstanding that conceiueth it, shalbe sighted & certaine witnesses of the rehearsed thinges. In your owne body shall you experience those deadly agonies, and in your soule shall you feelinglye finde those terrible

feares, yea and your present estate is in danger of the deepest harmes, if you doe not the sooner recouer your selfe into the folde and family of Gods Church. What haue you gotten by being so long customer to the world, but false ware sutable to the shoppe of such a marchant, whose traficke is toile; whose welth trashe, and whose gaine miserye? what interest haue you reaped, that maye equall your decrementes in grace and vertew, or what coulde you find in a vale of teares parageable to the fauour of God, with the losse wherof you were contented to buy it: You cannot be now inueigled with the passions of youth, which making a partiall estimate of thinges sette no distance betweene counterfeite and currant. For they are now worn out of force by tract  
of



of time, or fallen in reproofe by tri-  
 all of their folly. It cannot be feare  
 that leadeth you amisse, seeing it  
 were to vnfitting a thing, that the  
 crauāt cowardice of flesh & blood,  
 should daunte the prowesse of an  
 intelligent person, who by his wis-  
 dome can-not but discerne, how  
 much more cause there is to feare  
 God then man, & to stand in more  
 awe of perpetuall, then of tempo-  
 rall penalties. If it be an vngroun-  
 ded presumption of the mercy of  
 God, and the hope of his assistance  
 at the last plunge, (the ordinarye  
 lure of the Deuell to reclaime sin-  
 ners from the pursuite of vertew) it  
 is to palpable a collusion to misleade  
 a sound and sensed man, howsoe-  
 uer it preuaile with sicke and affe-  
 cted iudgmentes. Who would rely  
 eternall affaires vppon the gliding  
 B 3 slipp

slippernes & running streame of our vncertaine life? or who but one of distēpered wittes, would offer fraud to the decipherer of all thoughtes, with whome dissemble we may to our cost, but to deceiue him it is impossible. Shall we esteeme it cunning to robbe the time from him and bestow it on his enemies, who keepeth tale of the least minutes of our life, & will examine in the end how eche moment hath bene imployed. It is a preposterous pollicy in any wise conceit, to fight against God till our weapons be blunted, our forces consumed, our limmes impotent, and our best spent, and then when we fall for faintnes, and haue fought our selues almost dead to presume of his mercy, the wounds both of his sacred body, so often rubbed and renued by our sinnes,  
and

and euery parcell of our owne so  
 fundry and diuerse waies abused,  
 being so many whetstones and in-  
 centiuues to edge and exasperat his  
 reuenge against vs. It were a strange  
 peece of art, and a very exorbitant  
 course, while the shippe is sound,  
 the Pilote well, the sailers strong,  
 the gale fauourable, and the Sea  
 calme, to lye idle at rode, burning  
 so seasonable wether: and whē the  
 ship leaked, the Pilot were sick, the  
 Mariners faint, the stormes boiste-  
 rous, and the Sea a tormoile of out-  
 ragious surges, then to lanch forth,  
 to hoise vp sailes, and to set out for  
 a voiage into farre countries. Yett  
 such is the skill of these euening re-  
 penters, who though in the found-  
 nes of helth, and in the perfitte vse  
 of reason, they cannot resolue to  
 cut the gables and weigh the anc-

kers, that with-hold the from God, neuerthelesse they feed them selues with a strong perswasion, that whē their senses are astonied, their witts distracted, their vnderstanding dufked, and both the body and minde racked & tormēted with the throbs and gripes of a mortall sicknes, the forsooth will they thincke of the weightiest matters, & become soudaine Saintes, when they are scarce able to behaue them selues, like reasonable creatures. If neither the canon, ciuill, nor cōmon law alloweth, that a man perished in iudgement, should make any testament or bequeste of his temporall substance, being then presumed to be lesse then a man: how can he that is amated with the inward garboils of an vnsetled conscience, distraigned with the wringing fittes of his dying

dying fleshe, maimed in all his habilities, & circled in with so strange encombrances, be thought of dew discretion to dispose of his chiefeſt iewell, which is his ſoule, and to diſpatch the wholle menage of all eternity, & of the treasures of heauen, in ſo ſtormy and ſhorte a ſpurt. No no they that will loyter in ſeed time, and beginne onely to ſowe, when others reape: They that will riotte out their health, & caſt their accountes when they can ſcarcely ſpeake: They that will ſlumber out the day & enter their iorney when the light doth faile the. Let them blame their owne folly, if they dye in debt, and eternall beggers, and fall hedlong into the laſe of endleſſe perdition. Let ſuch harken to *S. Ciprians* leſſon. Let (ſaieth he) the greuousnes of our ſore, be the

sure of our sorrowe. Lett a deepe  
wounde haue deepe and dilligent  
cure. Lett no mans contrition be  
lesse then his crime. Thinkest thou  
that our Lord can be so soone ap-  
peased, whō with perfidious words  
thou hast denied, whom lesse then  
thy patrimony thou hast esteemed,  
whose temple with sacriligious cor-  
ruption thou hast defiled. Thinc-  
kest thou easely to recouer his fa-  
uour, whome thou hast auouched  
not to be thy Master? We must ra-  
ther most instantly intreat, we must  
passe the day in mourning, the night  
in watching, & weeping, our wholl  
time in plainfull lamentinge. We  
must fall prostrate vpon the ground  
humbling our selues in sackclothe  
and ashes. And hauing lost the gar-  
ment of Christ, we should be vn-  
willinge to be clothed with any o-  
ther

ther hauing farsed our stomackes with the viande of the Deuell, we should now desire to fast from all earthly food. We should ply good workes to purge our offences, we should be liberall in almes to auoid the death of our soules, that Christ may receiue, that the persecutour would haue spoiled, neither ought that patrimony to be kept or phansied, with which a man hath bene ensnared & vanquished. Not euery short fighe will be a sufficient satisfaction, nor euery knocke a warrant to get in. Many cry Lord Lord and are not accepted. The foolish Virgins knocked, and were not admitted. Iudas had some sorow and yet dyed desperate. Forflowe not saieth the holy ghost to be conuerted vnto God, and linger not of from day to day. for sodeinly will  
his

his wrath come, and in the time of reuenge he will destroy thee. Lett no man soiourne long in his sinfull securitye, nor post ouer his repentance till feare enforce him vnto it. Lett vs frame our premises as we would find our conclusion, and endeavour to liue as we are desirous to dye. Shall we offer the mayne crop to the Deuell, and set God to glean the reproofe of his haruest? Shall we gorge the Deuell with our fairest fruites, and turne God to feed on the filthy scraps of his leauings? How great a folly were it when a man pineth away in a perillous languour, to prouide gorgeous appa-rell, to bespeake sumptuous furniture, and take order for the rearing of stately buildings, & neuer thinking of his owne recouery, to let the discale take roote within him? were  
it not



it not the like vanity, for a Prince to dote so farre vpon his subiecte, as neglecting his owne regalty, to busie him selfe wholly in aduancing his seruant? Thus saith *S. Chrysostome* do they, that whē their soule hath surfeited with all kind of sinne and is drenched in the depth of infinite diseases, without any regard therof, labour their wittes in setting forth her garment, and in pampering the body with all possible delights. And whereas the soule shold haue the soueraignty, and the body followe the sway of her direction, seruile senses, and lawlesse appetites do rule her as superiours, and she is made a vassall in her owne dominions. What is there sayeth *S. Augustine* in thy meanest necessities, that thou wouldest not haue good? Thou wouldest haue a good house

house, good furniture, good appa-  
rell, good fare, good cattell, and  
not so much but thy hose and thy  
shoes thou wilt seek to haue good.  
Onely thy life and poore soule, thy  
principall charge, and of all other  
things the most worthy to be best,  
thou arte cōtent should be nought,  
and ly cancring and rusting in all  
kinde of euellles. O vnspeakable  
blindnes. Can we preferr our shoes  
before our soule, refusing to weare  
an euell shoe, and not caring to ca-  
ry an vgly & deformed soule? Alas  
let vs not set so litle by that, which  
God prised so much. Lett vs not  
rate our selues at soe base a peni-  
worth, being in truth of so pereles  
dignity. If the soule be such, that  
not all the gold and treasure of the  
world, nor any thing of lesse worth  
then the blood and life of almighty  
God

God, was able to buy it. If not all the deinties that witt can deuise, or heauen and earth afford, but onely Gods owne pretious body was by him deemed a repast fitt to feed it. If not all the creatures of this, nor millions of new worldes, if so many more were created, but onely the illimitable goodnes and maies-tye of God can satisfie the desire, and fill the compasse and capacity of it, who but of lame iudgemēt, or peruers will, yea who but of an incredulous mind, and pitiles spirite could set more by his shoes, then he did by his soule, or be cōtented to suffer so noble a paragon, so many monethes and yeeres to ly chanelled in ordure, & mired in all sinne. Can we not see our seruant sicke, but we allow him a Phisician, our horse diseased, but we send for a leach

leach, nor our garment torne, but we wili haue one to mend it? and can we so much maligne our soule, as to let it dye for want of cure, and seing it mangled with so many vices, neuer seeke any to restore it to the wonted integrity? Is our seruāt neerer, our beast more pretious, & our coate dearer, then our owne soule? If any shold call vs Epicures Aethestes, rebells vnto God, or murderers of soules, we would take it for an vntollerable reproche, and thinke it a most disgracefull & opprobrious calumniatiō. But to liue like Epicures, to sinne like Aethists to struggle against Gods callinges, and like violēt rebells to scorne his commandements: yea & with daiely and damnable wounds, barbarously to stab our infortunat soules, this we account no contumely, we reckon

reckon for no discreditt, yea rather we register it in the vaunte of our chiefe praises. O ye sonnes of men, how long will you carry this heauy hart, aliking vanity, and seeking lyes? how long will children loue the follies of infancye, and sinners runne carelesse and wilfull to their ruine? Will you keepe your chicken from the kite, your lambe from the wolfe, your faune frō the hoūd. Dare you not suffer a spider in your bosome, or a toade to come nere you, & can you nestle in your soule so many vipers as vices, and permit it to be so long chewed, & weried with the poisoned iawes, & tuskes of the Deuell? And is our soule so vaine a substance as to be had in so litle esteeme? Had Christ made shipwracke of his wisdome, or was he in a rage of passion when he became

came a wandering pilgrimme exiling him selfe from the comfortes of his Godhead, and passing three and thirty yeares in paine and penury for the behoofe of our soules? Was he surpris'd with a raving fitt, when in the tragedy of his passion so bloodily inflicted, and so patiently accepted, he made his body as a cloud, to resoluẽ into showers of innocent blood, and suffered the deereſt veines of his hart to be lanced, to giue full iſſue to the price of our ſoules redemption? Or if Chriſt did not erre, nor deeme amiſſe, when it pleaſed him to redeeme vs with ſo exceſſiue a ranſome, then what ſhould we iudge of our monſtrous abuſe, that ſell our ſoule to the Deuell for euerye vaine delighte, & rather aduenture the hazard therof, then of a ſelye  
*pittanc*

pittance of worldly pelfe. O that  
 a creature of so incōparable a price,  
 should be in the demaine of so vn-  
 naturall keepers, and that which is  
 in it selfe so gracious and amiable,  
 that the Angells and Saintes delite  
 to behold it, (as *S. Chrysostome* sai-  
 eth) should by sinne be fashioned  
 into so lothsome & disguised shapes  
 as to become a horror to heauen,  
 and a sutely pheere for the foulest  
 fiendes. Alas if the care of our own  
 harmes moue vs no more, but that  
 we can still be so barbarous to the  
 better portion of our selues, lett vs  
 at the lest feare to iniury an other  
 party, very carefull and ielious ouer  
 it: who will neuer endure so deepe  
 an impeachment of his interest to  
 passe vnreuenged. We must remē-  
 ber, that our soule is not onely a  
 part of vs, but also the temple, the  
 para-

paradise, and spouse of Almightye god, by him in baptisme garnished, stored, and endowed with moste graciouse ornamentes. And how think you, he can brooke, to see his temple prophaned, and turned into a denne of Deuels, his paradise displanted, and altered into a wilderness of serpentes, his spouse deflowered, and become an adulteresse to his vtter enemies? Durst we offer such vsage to our Princes, yea or to our farmers daughter? would not feare of the lawe, and popular shame, disturne vs from it? And shall not the reuerend Maiestye of almighty God, and the vnrebated iustice of his angry sword, terrifie vs from offering the like to his own spouse? Do we thinke God either so impotent that he cannot, so base and sottish that he will not, or so weak



weake witted that he knoweth not how to wreake him selfe vpon so contēptuous and daring offenders? Will he so neglect and lose his honour, which of all thinges he claimeth as his chiefe peculier? Will he that for the soules sake keepeth a reckoninge of our verye heares, which are but the excrementes of her earthly weed, see him selfe so much wronged in the principall, & passe it without remōstrance of his iust indignation? O deere Sir remēber thāt the scripture termeth it a thing full of horroure to fall into the hands of God, who is able to crush the proud spirittes of the obstinate, and to make his enemies the foote-stoole of his feete. Wraastle no longer against the cries of your owne conscience, and the forcible inspirations that God doth sende you.

Em

Embrace his mercy before the time of rigour, & returne to his Church lest he debate you his kingdome. He cannot haue God for his father, that refuseth to professe the Cathollicke Church for his mother, neither can he atchieue to the Church triumphant in heauen, that is not a member of the Church militant here in earth.

You haue bene alas too long an aliant in the tabernacles of sinners, and strayed too farr from the folde of Gods flocke. Turne now the biazze of your harte towardes the sanctuary of saluation, and the city of refuge, seeking to recompence your wandering steppes troddē in error, with a swifte gait and zelous progresse to Christian perfection, & redeeming the time because the daies be euell. The full of your spring-  
ride

